

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF JACKSON

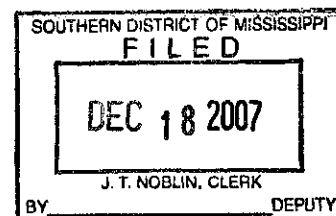
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December 17, 2007

Mr. J.T. Noblin, Clerk
United States District Court for the
Southern District of Mississippi
United States Courthouse
245 East Capitol Street
Jackson, MS 39201



Dear Mr. Noblin:

3:04cv251

Thank you for the opportunity to make a **Comment to the Court concerning the Olivia Y. Settlement**. For too long our children have suffered in Mississippi's foster care system. It is a shame that a lawsuit had to be filed in order to draw attention to the crisis innocent children are facing as ward's of the State.

For years now the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) has been understaffed and this has led to neglect and abuse of children. I support the settlement as long as it is strictly enforced and adhered to by the State and the Department of Human Services' DFCS. From what has been the experience of our Catholic Charities' Therapeutic Foster Care Counselors, DFCS is not only understaffed but there is also a lack of trained and qualified leadership from the top down. This must be addressed in the enforcement of the settlement.

I would hope that the best interest of the children in Mississippi's foster care system will be the driving force behind the settlement and its enforcement. It would be a travesty to waste this opportunity to fix a broken system. Our children deserve better.

Sincerely,

+ Joseph N. Latino
Joseph N. Latino
Bishop of Jackson

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